

**Research and Writing for Theological Studies
SA800 ON**

Course Syllabus (Updated 2/12/12)

(3 Credit Hours)

Spring 2012

January 31-April 26

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WEBSITES:

Seminary online portal (CAMS): <http://209.60.133.35/estudent/login.asp>

RATIONALE:

Many students enroll in seminary with no, or an inadequate, background in the techniques of research and writing. The learning process and products of learning will be enhanced by understanding and practicing traditional methods of research and writing, especially those methods that are specific to graduate theological research and writing.

Many graduate students have not developed study skills requisite for the rigors of seminary work. This course will provide a basic understanding of study and preparation skills for the students with needs in those areas.

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to enhance research, writing, study and presentation skills of graduate students entering the seminary. It is a “hands on” course in which students are expected to complete, among other assignments, a 500-word essay, a Critique, the planning stages for an exegesis and a Power Point presentation employing appropriate research, writing, and presentation techniques.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000.

Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.

Recommended:

Cetuk, Virginia Samuel. *What to Expect in Seminary: Theological Education as Spiritual Formation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998.

PURPOSES OF COURSE:

- To provide the student with the skills necessary to produce a well-researched, well-written and well-presented product.
- To assist in producing in the student a mind-set of confidence in his or her ability to do quality theological thinking, research and writing.
- To provide the student with study and learning techniques appropriate to graduate seminary work.
- To lift up the Holy Spirit as the illuminator of creative ideas.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student will be able to

- Write a 500 word essay
- Design a PowerPoint presentation
- Write a “Critique” paper using Stone and Duke’s *How to Think Theologically*
- Read and understand a professor’s syllabus and create a calendar for all class activities
- Use the Internet for research
- Use the library for research (specifically ATLA)
- Identify and utilize the correct form of writing required for particular assignments
- Read for comprehension a “difficult paper”
- Do the preliminary planning for an exegetical paper

INTRODUCTION:

There are 12 units in this course addressing the major objectives stated above. The student will submit four papers: (1) a 500 word essay, (2) a Critique, (3) all the planning stages for an exegesis, and (4) a previously written term paper presented in proper Turabian form. There are other shorter assignments that the student will complete including reading and comprehending a “difficult paper,” preparing a Power Point lesson and an exercise on using ATLA Serials (American Theological Library Association).

Each of the 12 units will prepare the student to complete the assignments. With the provided readings, the eProfessor and other classmates online, each assignment should be able to be completed satisfactorily.

Students are encouraged to begin a “reading file” and to add to that file all assignments that are required and recommended in this course. The student will find the reading file an invaluable resource during the seminary years and later.

ASSIGNMENTS:

In summary form here are the major assignments, details of which will be given later in the syllabus.

1. The 500 word Essay (not researched)
2. A Critique on the textbook “How to Think Theologically”
3. A Power Point Lesson on “Embedded and Deliberative Theology” a concept presented in “How to Think Theologically”
4. Comprehending and responding to a “difficult paper”
5. The research for an Exegetical Paper

6. A previously written paper, revised and presented in proper form according to Vyhmeister.
7. **Log on to the Discussion Forum page in the seminary website each week and respond to the weekly topic or question**

THE ARRANGEMENT OF EACH UNIT:

The units are each designed with the same components arranged in the same manner for ease of understanding.

1. The Topic or name of the unit
2. The Objective(s) being addressed by the unit
3. The Assignment (in red font)
4. The Readings for each unit (some Readings may be repeated on subsequent units)
5. Checklist for successful completion of the unit to be used by the student before submission of the work
6. New vocabulary to be mastered, if any
7. Due date of work
8. Percentage unit counts toward the final grade

THE READINGS FOR EACH UNIT:

All of the readings may not seem to go along with the topic of the unit, but they are designed to take the student through all of Stone and Duke, through all of Fee and Stuart, and through the Core book. Some of the readings are to be found on the Internet and some are to be found in the Appendix.

The Stone and Duke book is used for major assignments so a complete and thorough reading of it is necessary for successful completion of those units.

HOW TO SUBMIT THE WORK:

All work is to be emailed as an attachment to the professor on or before the date announced for each unit (lmartin@ptseminary.edu). All work is submitted in this manner:

- **A cover sheet prepared according to the instructions given in Vyhmeister, pp 83, 109. The cover sheet MUST include the UNIT NUMBER**
- The body of the assignment
- Personal questions or observations regarding the assignment
- See example on page 5.

GRADING:

- Assignments and value
 - 500-word essay, _____ (100)
 - Vocabulary and grammar skills, _____ (50)
 - Annotated bibliography, _____ (50)
 - Midterm critique paper, __ (7A=50 pt & 7B=150pt) __ (200)
 - PowerPoint Presentation, _ (8A=30 pt & 8B=120 pt) __ (150)
 - ATLA Assignment, _____ (50)
 - Difficult Article. __ (5=80pt & 6= 120 pt) _____ (200)

- Exegesis Planning _ (9=20 pt, 10=50 pt, 12=250 pt) (320)
- Discussion Forums _____ (12 @ 10 pts each) (120)
- Term paper in proper format (260)

GRADING SCALE:

1400-1500 = A
1350-1399 = A-
1300-1349 = B+
1250-1299 = B
1200-1249 = B-
1150-1199 = C+
1100-1149 = C
1050-1099 = C-
900-1049 = D

Important Note:

Your attendance is registered through your participation on the Discussion Forum.

(NOTE: THIS IS A SAMPLE FORMAT FROM VYHMEISTER)

THE PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A CRITIQUE OF STONE AND DUKE'S

HOW TO THINK THEOLOGICALLY

UNIT 7B

AN ASSIGNMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF

RESEARCH AND WRITING FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

SUBMITTED TO

LEE ROY MARTIN, DTH

BY

YOUR NAME

March xx, 2012

UNIT ONE: *The 500 Word Essay*

Prayer: Father, as we begin this journey into unknown territory, I pray clarity of mind and ease of work for our students. I pray, Holy Spirit, that You will lead them into all truth and that You will divinely inspire them with “God-ideas.” Help them redeem their time and show them how to schedule all the work that is before them in this class and other classes that they may be taking. You are our God, and You give us abundant peace. Amen.

Objective: The student will be able to write a 500 word theme based on a selected topic using the following steps:

1. select and narrow a topic
2. design a thesis statement with supporting topic sentences
3. write an appropriate introductory paragraph ending with the thesis statement
4. write a minimum of three developmental paragraphs
5. write an appropriate concluding paragraph

Purpose: Any well-written paper, regardless of length, follows the same pattern as a short paper does. Learning the steps of writing a short paper also teaches the student how to organize the answer to an essay test question.

Readings: Study the visual of the five hundred-word theme attached to this unit. Stone and Duke—Preface V-VII; Introduction pp 1-10; pp 120-126; Core—Chapter One.

Assignment: Write a 500-word essay on one of the following topics:

1. “The person or persons who has/have had the greatest influence on my ministry.”
2. “Why I am Proud to be Pentecostal”

Requirements for successful completion:

- _____ 1. Introductory paragraph beginning with broad, general statements narrowing to a more concrete, specific thesis statement that guides the thought and organization of the entire essay.
- _____ 2. A thesis statement that is well-designed and is meaningful, limited, specific and argumentative (Argumentative means taking a position regarding the main idea of your paper).
- _____ 3. At least three well-designed developmental paragraphs that support and develop the thesis statement.
- _____ 4. Each developmental paragraph containing only sentences that develop the topic sentence.
- _____ 5. The concluding paragraph introduces no new ideas and reiterates the thesis of the paper.

Points Represented by this Assignment: 100